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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord, and deal graciously with our petitions. We put our trust in Your word, as we lean upon Your loving kindness and tender mercies. Bless this land we love, infusing its citizens with strength, wisdom, and faith. Lord, guide those whom we ourselves have set in authority, keeping them from disorder, discord, and division. Lift them to the heights of Your great purposes so they will have daily insights into Your will and way.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 14, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of the FAA authorization bill. I have spoken to the chairman of the committee. I have spoken to the Republican leader. We are going to do everything we can to move this matter forward as quickly as possible. Those who have amendments should offer them. We will try to set up the votes for those that are already pending at the earliest possible date. We could do some of them in the morning. We may even be able to get a number of them out of the way tonight, if we can work something out on that. At 4:30, we will turn to executive session to consider the nomination of James Graves of Mississippi to be a U.S. circuit judge for the Fifth Circuit and Edward Davila of California to be a U.S. district judge for the Northern District of California.

At 5:30, there will be a voice vote on Graves and a rollcall vote on Davila. Senators should be prepared for additional rollcall votes this evening relating to amendments to the FAA bill.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier today, President Obama showed

the American people just how he intends to spend their tax dollars, and how much more intends to borrow, to fund his vision of the future. And it is a huge disappointment to those in both parties who were hoping the President would take this opportunity to address the grave and imminent fiscal crises we face. The President's budget is the clearest sign yet he simply does not take our fiscal problems seriously.

It is a patronizing plan that says to the American people that their concerns are not his concerns.

It is a plan that says fulfilling the President's vision of a future of trains and windmills is more important than a balanced checkbook.

It is a plan that asks our children to pay for an imaginary vision of the future that may or may not come about by adding trillions to a debt that will be very real to them indeed.

The President's budget comes in at close to a thousand pages. The people who voted for a new direction in November have a five-word response: We don't have the money.

We don't have the money.

Americans have been asking a crucial question as we approached this debate: how do we get back to balance, how do we get to a place where Washington spends less than it takes in. And the simple fact about this budget is that the President and all his advisers couldn't come up with a single year in the next 10 where we do that.

That is the key question in this debate, but it is the one question that the President and all of his advisers don't seem to have been the least bit interested in.

The White House wants us to engage in a debate this week about percentage cuts at this or that agency, about multi-year projections and CBO scores. It all misses the point. The real point is this: We are broke. We don't have the money.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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